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THE SALMAGUNDI EXHIBITION.

IN attempting to fill the Academy walls the artists of the Salmagundi Sketch Club have, to use a homely expression, "spread their butter over too large a piece of bread." While there is enough creditable work for a fair ordinary display, the present exhibition is made conspicuously weak by diluting what is good and strong by the infusion of a lot of contributions such as, if judged by their merits, assuredly would not procure the authors admission to the club. The tendency of the Salmagundi seems to be to forget the proper functions of black and white, and produce oil paintings in monochrome instead of sketches in crayon, charcoal, or pen-and-ink. Because some magazine draughtsmen, who make oil pictures in black and white so that they may be photographed well on the block, have sent these to past Salmagundi exhibitions to be hung, there seems to be a general abandonment of legitimate media for monochrome work, and every young fellow who can handle a brush inflicts upon the public a glistening, sticky thing in a frame, which has absolutely no "raison d'être" as an exhibition piece. Mistakes in drawing may be freely pardoned in an unpretentious crayon or a charcoal sketch, but what consideration does Mr. George Inness, Jr., for example, deserve when he invites censure by sending such a wretched affair as his stallion and groom, in a frame with the proportions of an extra-large sized Academy picture, and mistakes in proportion at least to the size of the frame?

Mr. G. W. Edwards and Mr. Leon Moran, young artists whose work it has been our pleasure to commend before they were as favorably known as they are now, fully justify in their exhibits here the opinions we have expressed as to their talent and their modesty. Mr. Edwards' marine and figure studies are full of merit, and young Moran, in his single figure of a girl "Calling Home the Cows," contrives to tell a very simple story in a very graceful manner. Percy Moran is creditably represented, and Edward Moran, the father, ably sustains his reputation with a very strong marine. Each of the artists named in this group draws well in charcoal and in pen-and-ink, and could well afford to set the example of returning to their use.

Sarony, who sends several graceful studies from the nude, shows what effective work can be done with charcoal and stomp. George W. Maynard uses crayon. So does Arthur Quartley. As in his capital little marine called "Abandoned," he sometimes employs Chinese white after using the stomp. F. Hopkinson Smith works in crayon on gray paper. Champney gives in pure crayon a capital study of the head of a girl. Kruseman Van Elton, in his large landscapes in crayon, by too much finish gives his work the conventional veneer of a lithograph. E. A. Abbey has some strong, clean-looking pen-and-ink drawings in agreeable contrast to many of the painty things about them. Church has a taking sketch of a pretty gleaner with a dove nibbling at some ears of wheat in the sheaf she holds. Charles Volkmar, A. F. Bunner, Nehlig, M. F. Burns, H. P. Share, F. M. Gregory, Frank Fowler, J. S. Hartley, and E. M. Richards are all represented by characteristic work, some of which is suggested in the autographic sketches on another page of the magazine. "His Lordship" is an attractive little picture of an infantine scion of nobility at dinner, with a pompous flunky waiting on him; but one feels at once that the idea is overdone, on noticing the bottle of champagne in the cooler and the decanter of sherry on the table. Mrs. M. B. Odenheimer Fowler has a charming female head painted in red oils. The same thing done in red crayon might have been worthy of much praise.

The display of etchings must be pronounced a failure. The portfolio by members of the club contains nothing worth exhibiting except the contributions by Volkmar, Edwards, Richards, Champney, and Vance. Apart from these there are so few American etchings, good or bad, that wall space has been given over to foreign published works which are not even new. Seymour Haden's "Marshes off Erith," executed in 1865, is here, as well as several plates from the French journal "L'Art." They are in the catalogue, and some have been sold at five dollars each. Who is responsible for their presence? A member of the club told the writer that he supposed those from "L'Art" must be proofs sent direct from Paris. But this is improbable: they are so framed that they show no margins to distinguish them from ordinary impressions.

There is much talent in the Salmagundi Club, which,

properly directed, will bring out of this society a crop of matured artists who will exercise a decided influence on the art of the country. But the club must not repeat the mistake of this exhibition if it would sustain the reputation so ungrudgingly given to it when it was content to show its work in a single gallery, without the aids of portfolios of etchings (which it is not yet competent to produce), illustrated catalogues, and the attractive glamour of an Academy exhibition of paintings. The Salmagundi is professedly a *sketch* club. It is on that it has made its reputation. Let it continue to be such, confine its attempts within the limits of its abilities, and it will continue to deserve well of the public.

A CRICHTON OF THE BRUSH.

"THE world knows nothing of its greatest men," it has been said. Some persons who read this article, perhaps, are unaware that "Col. James Fairman, M.A., the American artist and art lecturer," has returned to New York after having "pursued his studies in all the great art centres of Europe" for eleven years. Some, indeed, may be so ignorant that they never heard of Col. James Fairman, M.A. We ourselves confess to such ignorance until this distinguished man honored us with a call and supplemented his personal narrative by handing us his printed biography, which establishes beyond dispute that Col. James Fairman, M.A., is no ordinary person. He "began drawing when five years of age, painted five years in water colors before he touched oil"; and, having "studied what little New York could teach in portrait painting," went to London. "Returning to America in a full-rigged ship, he secured permission to do work as a 'light hand,' which involved reefing, steering, and other duties, and thus, in a seven weeks' stormy voyage, he studied technical matters in marine painting." He does not seem, however, to have taken at once to marine or even house painting. We find him, instead, "brought prominently forward as a platform speaker." Then "he took a thorough course in law, under the Hon. E. Delafield Smith." He "next pursued a course in Latin, and later acquired a good knowledge of New Testament Greek," which, no doubt, he has found very useful in his career as an artist. In quick succession he became a member of the New York City Board of Education, a candidate for Congress, and "an enthusiastic student of the art of war." "Into the service of his country he threw himself with all his ardent energy," and rose to be a colonel of volunteers. He left the army in 1863, and took a studio in New York, but "soon discovered how little could be taught by the leading landscape painters in the city." "One of his first landscapes, called 'Westward the Course of Empire takes its Way,' we are told, 'was presented to Gen. John C. Fremont, and the artist now thinks it 'a matter of indulgent generosity that the great Pathfinder accepted it as a gift.' After a visit to the Colonel's studio we incline to the same opinion."

We cull a few gems from Colonel Fairman's biography. They ought, by right, to be incorporated in the next edition of the Dictionary of Artists of the Nineteenth Century; but as that publication has shamefully omitted even to mention his name, this is perhaps too much to expect. We begin with an item of art news:

"In 1867 he published a series of articles in The Chicago Art Journal, criticising the art organizations of America. The work was handled in the fearless and forcible manner which has characterized his public services; and his exposure of the utter unfitness of the so-called 'National Academy of Design' in New York, for any service in the true interests of art, was the pioneer effort to the logical results which have followed in better art schools which have superseded it."

Another paragraph tells us that in the winter of 1867 Colonel Fairman delivered three lectures in New York on art, which, it is to be hoped, by the way, were duly attended by the artists whose ignorance he so scathingly exposes. We are told that—

"These were profound discourses... and, as we understand, will soon be put forth by the author in a small volume. Mr. Fairman is recognized by the many who have heard him in New England and elsewhere as the most brilliant and instructive art lecturer in America."

We next find this truly great man compared with Turner, to the great disadvantage of the Englishman:

"Scientific knowledge has opened to Fairman the artistic method of rendering the sunbeam, which Turner never fully discovered. The golden radiance over the hills of Jerusalem, the

glow of the oriental sky, the evanescent beauty of the foaming billows of the ocean, the light streaming through the leaves and branches of the birch-tree, or falling on the backs of cattle from the open gateway of the sun—who has given the world better pictures of all these?"

An anonymous American critic is credited with this:

"In power of depicting the glories of the sun-light, and producing the illusions of nature, especially in her phenomenal aspect, he [Colonel James Fairman, M.A., not Turner be it understood] has, in truth no equal. This is the confession of European art students of the highest rank, as well as of intelligent judges generally, who find his works a refreshing contrast with the crudeness and inanity of much that we are called upon to admire in American landscape painting."

The biographer has not done with him yet. Colonel James Fairman, M.A., he insists, "adds to the qualities of an orator and a thinker in the arenas of social science, politics, and theology, the qualities of a poet." He then gives some of this Crichton's verses, which we hope our readers will accept, on our judgment, as very fine, without requiring us to reprint them.

If the biographer had not already exhausted the language of favorable criticism, we might try to say something pleasant about the pictures in the Colonel's studio which represent—so the notice on our invitation card modestly puts it—"the highest school of modern art." But the Colonel having reached perfection, what remains to be said? An art critic who accompanied us on this visit to the shrine of genius flippantly stigmatized the pictures as "clever rubbish." But that only shows that he is no judge of rubbish.

AN AGENCY FOR ART COMMISSIONS.

READERS of THE ART AMATEUR so often request us to have crayon and oil portraits, paintings on china silk, etc., done for them that we have decided to establish an agency in connection with this publication, especially for the execution of such commissions and of others, perhaps, of a similar kind. We have arranged with competent artists to do the work at moderate prices. No work will be allowed to go out unless approved as being up to the proper artistic standard of excellence. Persons at a distance from art centres we believe especially will find this a convenience.

My Note Book.



NOT a little fuss is being made about the monotype process, as it is called, for producing pictures which have something of the combined effects of a wash drawing and an etching. The modus operandi is very simple. With printer's ink of any color the artist makes his drawing on a clean copper plate, manipulating with a brush, a stick, or the finger, to produce the required effects. One impression is then taken from the plate on an engraver's press in etching style, and if the artist's work is good you obtain by printing it on India paper an attractive picture, which to the uninitiated looks valuable. The trick—for it is nothing else—has long been known to practical engravers. But recently Mr. Charles A. Walker, of Boston, has availed himself of the process to produce an imposing array of landscape monotypes which have brought large prices at Knoedler's, where they have been on exhibition. In Boston he sold some at amazingly high figures. The buyers were impressed with the "artistic" appearance of the pictures, without the remotest idea as to how they were made. Mr. Bicknell, of Boston, is a kind of rival of Mr. Walker in this enterprise. Both send specimens to the Salmagundi exhibition. Of course, the pictures are valuable only according to the artistic ability of the makers of them.

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THE sumptuously printed and illustrated edition of Thackeray's "Chronicle of the Drum," just brought out by Charles Scribner's Sons, must divide with Osgood's "Lucile" the honor of representing the American school of wood engraving among the new gift-books of the season. It brings back memories of a series of American illustrated art works, all excellent in their day. There was "The Festival of Song," brought out some twenty years ago by Bunce & Huntington. Not much later came "Bitter Sweet" from

the Scribners' press, with illustrations by E. J. Whiting; "The Culpit Fay," published by Carleton, and illustrated by Lumley, and "Snow Bound," brought out by Ticknor & Fields, with drawings by Harry Fenn, and woodcuts by Linton and Anthony. This latter may be considered as the first of a long series of elegant American illustrated gift-books worthy of being classed with "The Chronicle of the Drum."

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A VIGNETTE of Thackeray on the title-page is delicately cut by Closson. Howard Pyle has three drawings. One of them—the frontispiece—is the scene of the execution of Louis XVI.; but the picture is so crowded with soldiers that one has to look twice before he discovers the king crowded in a corner and ascending the scaffold in a very stiff and unkinglike pose. With this exception the block is admirable. It is cut by French. This very capable engraver executes another of Mr. Pyle's illustrations—the tenantless guillotine seen in the dead stillness of the night—which is, perhaps, the most effective in this book. A more dramatic picture in black and white, indeed, has rarely been produced. It may well be doubted, however, whether moonlight in nature could be so distributed as, at the same moment, to illumine the dreadful notch wherein the victim's head is to rest and the edge of the suspended knife. Pyle's other illustration, Marie Antoinette in her cell at the moment that the head of the Princess Lamballe is borne before the window on a pike, is very well engraved by E. Clement.

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SOME of the best illustrations of the volume are contributed by A. B. Frost. Very good is the scene showing the aged veteran where,

"On a sunshiny bench of a tavern
He sits and he prates of old wars."

Hardly inferior is the picture of the old fellow baring his breast to show his scars. Both blocks are skilfully engraved; they are by Hellawell and Karst respectively. "I'll give you a curse on all traitors!"—another illustration by Frost—is well drawn, full of action and admirably cut by Held. Fredericks is largely represented, his work, with the exception of the picture of Louis in his workshop, by Winham, being cut by Karst. These blocks are of unequal merit, both as to drawing and engraving. The best, perhaps, is the procession to the guillotine—

"Young virgins with fair golden tresses,
Old silver-hair'd prelates and priests."

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LUNGREN has three, two cut by Closson, and one by Davis. None of these are satisfactory. His figures always appear on the floor of a skating-rink or ascending an inclined plane. The talent of this young artist is undoubted, but he makes no progress. His work is all alike. With fatal facility he perpetuates his errors, which should long ago have been unlearned. Such engravers as Closson and Davis would certainly have produced better results with better drawings.

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TABER'S best block is cut by Held; but surely the Hon. Samuel J. Tilden must have stood for the portrait of Napoleon. Schell's single contribution, a view of Quebec, is charmingly engraved by Geyer; the middle distance is particularly well rendered. Share shows power in his illustrations of an assault on the Bastille, a march of pikemen, and British Guardsmen resisting a charge at Waterloo; but some of his figures are incorrect in drawing and they lack solidity. Birch's illustration of the Queen on the scaffold is commonplace, and Wolf, in engraving it, has done nothing to redeem it. Woodward has a good little landscape cut by J. Hellawell, and George Gibson contributes some excellent ornamental titles and tail pieces, engraved in good style by Andrew, Hellawell and others.

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OF the gift-books of the season perhaps none is so worthy of a permanent place in the library as George B. Smith's "Illustrated British Ballads," published by Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co. Beautifully printed, and profusely illustrated with wood-engravings after designs by the best British artists, these two handsome volumes form the most complete work of the kind yet produced; the selections ranging from "Chevy Chase" by quaint

old Percy, to "Little Billee," by Thackeray, and "The Lord of Burleigh," by Tennyson. The only important omission I notice in the list of authors is the name of W. S. Gilbert, whose "Yarn of the Nancy Brig," and "Gentle Alice Brown," are certainly worthy of a place in the collection. An excellent etching by Lalanze after a drawing by M. L. Gow, and a still better one by C. Waltner, after a picture by H. Holiday, are given as frontispieces.

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OF children's holiday books this season there seems to be no end. Since the notice of those last month, I find many on my table. "Cat's Cradle," rhymes illustrated by Charles Kendrick, and published by R. Worthington, with its glaring coloring, shouts for recognition; several of the pictures are very well drawn. Another holiday book in color is "The Decorative Sisters," published by A. D. F. Randolph & Co. This is not exactly for children, being a clever skit on some of the art follies of the day; it is written in ballad measure by Josephine Pollard, and illustrated by Walter Satterlee. The drawing is not always good, but the coloring is uniformly execrable. It is difficult to understand how Messrs. Wemple & Co., who confessedly are responsible for it, can have the assurance to proclaim the fact on the same page with the declaration that they are "art lithographers." There is hardly a page in the book printed in register.

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WITH reform so much needed in the color printing of holiday books, it is gratifying to find the publishers offering prizes to young people for the best colorings of these Christmas productions. It seems the fashion for children nowadays to make the drawings for the publishers, and it is proper enough, I suppose, for them to complete the job and color them. The efforts of the little ones cannot possibly produce any worse results than have been seen this season, and the chances are that they will show artistic advance.

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MR. GEORGE W. HARLAN, the enterprising publisher of Louis C. Tiffany's "My Boy and I," who seems to have originated this competitive coloring idea, offers three cash prizes amounting to \$400, to be awarded next March, for the best three colorings of one or more pictures in "Tutti Frutti;" the competition is to be limited to amateurs under twenty years of age. The judges in this nursery tournament are to be John La Farge, Louis C. Tiffany, and Elihu Vedder. This is not a joke.

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THE other competition grows out of the production by White & Stokes of "Good Times," a child's book of rhymes by Mrs. Candace Wheeler, illustrated by Miss Dora Wheeler. Some of the pictures are very graceful and pretty. Specimen colorings are given as suggestions to those who will fill in the outlines on the other pages, and they are really such good models that some alleged "art lithographers" might study them to advantage. In flat tinting indeed it would be difficult to find better examples than the "Dainty Little Maid" on page 20, or "Pretty Polly," on page 55. The drawing in the book is often very faulty. The dog with the wooden leg on the last page is so especially bad that it should certainly have been omitted. The judges in this competition are Miss Dora Wheeler, Miss Rosina Emmet, and Miss Caroline Townsend. There are to be three prizes, \$75, \$50, and \$25, respectively. By the way, could not a fourth prize be offered for which "art lithographers" might be allowed to compete?

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"CHRISTMAS Carols and Midsummer Songs," published by D. Lothrop & Co., is made attractive with heavy paper, clear type, and illustrations which have appeared in Wide Awake. There are good pictures by Champney, Church, Lungren, Jennie McDermott, and Miss M. Stone. In a printed notice the publisher says that "the cover, designed by Lungren, is the novelty of the season; and with its full moon, and birds, and blossoms, and its grayish and reddish gold tones is peculiarly harmonious." In my humble judgment it is peculiarly hideous, resembling nothing so much as a soiled napkin inadvertently dipped into the coffee at breakfast. The printer, by the way, has done his

best to ruin the book by binding the sheets before they were dry. Nearly every illustrated page is offset.

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ONE of the best examples of American color printing of the season, despite some of the blocks being badly out of register, is the pretty cover designed by Miss Rosina Emmet for "Purple and Gold," a collection of verses chanting the praises of the golden rod and the purple aster, published by James R. Osgood & Co.

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AN evening contemporary, noticing "The Cotter's Saturday Night," by Burns, published by Porter & Coates, says it fancies it has seen the book more satisfactorily illustrated. Perhaps it has in mind the publication of the book by the old firm of Scribners, about a score of years ago. But the engravings in the present volume, by John Filmer, from drawings by Chapman, are the very same.

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THE etchings in the November number of The Portfolio (J. W. Bouton), are "In Summer Woods," a charming study from nature, by C. P. Slocombe, and Speke Hall, one of the quaint mansions of Lancashire, about which Leo Grindon has had much to say in Mr. Hamerton's magazine. This latter etching, by Thomas Riley, is too hard, in parts, to be wholly satisfactory. Such clouds as he draws could only exist by a suspension of the laws of gravitation. The third part of Professor Sidney Colvin's interesting paper on "The Amazons in Greek Art" is illustrated by photographs of very artistic bas-reliefs from ancient slabs in the British Museum.

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MENTIONING the name of Professor Colvin calls to mind the important fact that this learned archæologist, who has been advertised as engaged to write the preface to James R. Osgood & Co.'s "edition de luxe" of General Di Cesnola's album of Cyprian antiquities, has concluded that he cannot afford to associate his name any longer with this doubtful collection. Since promising his co-operation, it seems that he has carefully studied Mr. Feuardent's charges which appeared in THE ART AMATEUR and have been supplemented by special photographic cards showing the untrustworthiness of the collection. Persons who, from motives of policy, may have sided with the Director of the Metropolitan Museum in this controversy, will find it advisable to revise their judgment as soon as they can conveniently do so; for few things are more certain than that Mr. Feuardent's charges are true, and before long will be substantiated to the satisfaction of all fair-minded persons.

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IN the Prang Christmas card competition Miss Dora Wheeler carried off the two chief prizes, each of \$1000. Her design is entitled "The Light of the World." It shows a wretched-looking beggar woman and child, standing on the edge of the globe, entranced by a beautiful vision of the Holy Virgin and Babe. A leafless sapling—which some one in my hearing waggishly declared must be the North Pole—affords the outcasts a scanty shelter. The card is certainly a pretty one, but I am puzzled to understand what there is in it which should have won for it the combined "public" and "artist" vote.

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THIS method of awarding prizes by vote, by the way, is obviously open to serious objection. The Herald says that "a determined and organized effort was made to secure the first 'popular' prize for a design possessing a minimum of artistic value." This, it seems, was thwarted by the managers. But what right had the managers to know how the vote was going? The ballots were dropped into a locked box, which should only have been opened at the close of the competition.

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MR. WALTER BLACKMAN, a pupil of Gerôme, has returned to New York with a large number of pictures and sketches which are now on exhibition at the American Art Gallery. Mr. F. A. Bridgman did this with decided success, which he fully merited. Mr. Blackman's work is too crude and unimportant to justify him in following Mr. Bridgman's precedent.

MONTEZUMA.